

nights occur in the course of the two winters in which the formation of arches of the aurora is noticed and their direction recorded; of these, *ten* are to the *west*, having their centres rather to the southward of west, the arches extending from N.W. to S.S.E. and S.E.; *seven* are to the *east*, or more precisely to the southward of east, the arches extending from N.E. to S.E. and S.W. Of the five others, *four* are said to be from east to west across the zenith, and cannot therefore be classed with either of the preceding, and *one* is noticed generally as being to the north. The facts here recorded appear to afford an evidence of the same nature as those mentioned by M. Erman, as far as regards there being two centres of the phenomena. In respect to the relative brilliancy of the eastern and western aurora, nothing very decided can be inferred from the register. If, as M. Erman supposes, that they may be referred respectively to “*les deux foyers magnétiques de l'hémisphère boréal*,” it is proper to notice that the position of Alten is nearly midway between those localities.

There can be no doubt that the frequent appearance of the aurora, and the peculiarities of the phenomena observed there, render it a most desirable quarter for a magnetical and meteorological observatory.

EDWARD SABINE.

W. H. SYKES.

2. “Second Letter on the Electrolysis of Secondary Compounds, addressed to Michael Faraday, Esq., D.C.L., F.R.S., &c.” By J. Frederic Daniell, Esq., For. Sec. R.S., Professor of Chemistry in King’s College, London.

The author, in this letter, prosecutes the inquiry he had commenced in the former one, into the mode in which the chemical elements group themselves together to constitute *radicles*, or proximate principles. He considers his experiments as establishing the principle that, considered as electrolytes, the inorganic oxy-acid salts must be regarded as compounds of metals, or of that extraordinary compound of nitrogen and four equivalents of hydrogen to which Berzelius has given the name of *ammonium*, and compound anions, chlorine, iodine, &c., of the Haloide salts; and as showing that this evidence goes far to establish experimentally the hypothesis originally brought forward by Davy, of the general analogy in the constitution of all salts, whether derived from oxy-acids or hydro-acids. Some remarks are made on the subject of nomenclature, and the rest of the paper is occupied with the details of the experiments, all bearing on the important subject which he has undertaken to investigate.

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May 28, 1840.

FRANCIS BAILY, Esq., V.P., in the Chair.

The ballot for the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Norwich was deferred until the next meeting of the Society, there not being a sufficient number of Fellows present.

The following papers were read, viz. :

1. "Meteorological Register kept at Port Arthur, Van Diemen's Land, during the year 1838, and Register of Tides at Port Arthur, from August 1838 to July 1839, both inclusive." By Deputy-Assistant-Commissary-General Lempriere. Communicated by Sir John Franklin, R.N., F.R.S., &c.

2. "Notice relative to the form of the Blood-particles of the *Ornithorhynchus hystrix*." By John Davy, M.D., F.R.S.

A portion of the blood of the *Ornithorhynchus hystrix*, mixed when fresh with a strong solution of common salt, being examined by the author, exhibited a few globules of irregular shape. Another portion, preserved in syrup, contained numerous globules, most of which had an irregular form, but many were circular; none, however, were elliptical, like those of birds. Hence the author concludes, that in form they accord more with those of Mammalia.

3. "Researches on Electro-chemical equivalents, and on a supposed discrepancy between some of them and the atomic weight of the same bodies, as deduced from the theory of isomorphism." By Lieut.-Colonel P. Yorke. Communicated by Michael Faraday, Esq., D.C.L., F.R.S., &c.

The author describes various experiments made with a view to determine the electro-chemical equivalents of sodium and potassium. Three experiments gave, respectively, 22·3, 22·9, and 25, as the equivalent of the former; and two other experiments gave, respectively, 45 and 41·7, as the equivalent of the latter of these substances. He then inquires what would be the result of the electrolyzation of the aqueous solutions of soda and potash, on the hypothesis of these bodies being composed of two equivalents, or atoms, of metal, and one of oxygen. To determine this question he employs a solution of dichloride of copper in muriatic acid, as being a substance composed of two atoms of metal and one of an electro-negative element. Its electrolysis gave as the equivalent of copper, 52·8, 59·4, and 61·6, numbers approximating closely to 63·2, or double the atomic weight of copper. After a long train of investigation, he concludes that there is no reason deducible from the theory of isomorphism for doubting the correctness of the received atomic weights of silver, sodium, &c., but that the difficulty, or anomaly, if it may be so called, should be considered as attaching itself to the di-compounds of copper; and that Faraday's propositions on this subject remain unimpeached.

4. "Second series of Approximate Deductions made from about 50,000 observations taken during the years 1836, 1837, and 1838, at the P. Louis Observatory, Mauritius, four times each day; namely, at 8 A.M., at noon, and at 4 and 8 P.M." By J. A. Lloyd, Esq., F.R.S.

5. "On the Solubility of Silica by Steam; with an account of an experiment on the subject, conducted in the East Indies by